

So you want to keep Guppies

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Tell anyone you keep tropical fish and most likely they will be able to name the Guppy, in my experience the three most popular fish people know are Guppies, Neons and Angels. So the Guppy is in fact one of the most popular fish, and possibly the most commonly kept, as anyone starting with a fish tank usually gets these little fish. Every aquarist shop sells them and any pet shop that has just a few tanks will stock them. Why are they so popular?

The Guppy is a lively peaceful fish, breeds easily and comes in a vast array of different colours. Because they are small more can be kept in a tank than the larger fish, so providing plenty of activity. A sight to behold is a well planted tank full of various coloured Guppies.

The Guppy has its own serious following throughout the world, with many aquarist's only keeping them, and have whole fish rooms full of guppies. Because of the serious breeders who have carried out selected breeding and line breeding we now have a great variety of colours and tail types. There are 12 recognised tail types, including broad, sword and short tails.

If you become serious about keeping these fish how do you choose which type and colour to keep? It is impossible for any breeder to keep all tail types and colours, and the ones they do keep is their own personal preference. The way to decide which to keep is look on this website, other websites, and books, but by far the best way to decide is to see them first, an ideal way is to visit an open show, even better is to visit one of the Guppy League Rounds, [details on this site](#). Here you will not only see excellent quality fish, you will also meet some of the UK's top breeders who are always willing to help and advise new comers, and may even have some from their line bred strain for you to purchase, if you know which you would like prior to visiting one of the rounds you can always contact the breeder, and they may be able to take them there for you.

When deciding on how serious you want to become, you will need to consider how many tanks you can devote to them, the time you have available and what you would like to achieve, you may be happy just having tanks full of these little fish, or you may wish to become a serious breeder and wish to show them. If this is the case it is very important that you obtain quality line bred fish, and keep the different strains separate, otherwise they will just interbreed, and the quality will be lost forever. If you want to keep a specific strain but do not wish to show them, then you could have them in one tank and let them flock breed, however with this method over time the quality may be lost.

For serious breeding there are a number of excellent articles on this site, so I will not repeat what is already available.

When it comes to feeding each breeder will have their own idea, however the main point to remember is always feed them good quality food, I feed good quality flake food supplemented by microworms 3-4 times a week, and frozen blood worm once a week. Most breeders recommend feeding brine shrimp to baby guppies, however I have personally never fed this, instead I do feed De Capsulated Brine Shrimp Eggs, which are just fed direct

to the fish. Apparently these provide more protein than live. My adult Guppies also take this particularly the females.

Another very important consideration is frequent water changes, I change between 25 and 50% weekly, my water is stored in 5 gallon buckets and aerated, for two days prior to using, as my fish room is space heated, this water is the same temperature as in the tanks so avoids any shocks to the fish. Because the water is allowed to stand and aerated I do not use any de-chlorinator, and it has never given me any problems. Some breeders have an automatic water changing system, but I don't so time has to be allowed to carry this task out.

When it comes to algae in the tanks I only clean this off the front glass, and leave it on the sides and back, Guppies will peck at this, so this does provide another source of food for them.

I do hope you decide to keep this little fish, if you buy quality fish, provide them with good quality food, and carry out regular tank maintenance you will be well rewarded by your efforts. If you have any questions please remember you can always use the forum on this site, where an experienced breeder will give you the benefit of their knowledge.

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